

CHAPTER 6. NEXT STEPS

The Phase 1 Investigation was initiated in Spring 2002 and is projected to complete in September 2003 with a final version of the Phase 1 Investigation Report. This In-Progress Review document is a status report that describes planning, technical, and public involvement work completed through December 2002. It is intended to provide an early review of work completed to date and the type of information that will be included in the Phase 1 Information Report. In summary, this document provides a status summary of the following topics:

- Background information on the Investigation,
- Existing and future conditions related to water project operations,
- Water resources problems and opportunities to be addressed in the Investigation,
- Plan formulation approach and tasks,
- Model development and application to the Friant Enlargement Concept,
- Initial screening of storage site options; and
- Public involvement approach.

The results of the modeling analysis provide initial direction for additional evaluations. As described in Chapter 4, the findings from Friant Enlargement Concept single-purpose evaluation suggest that modeling assumptions regarding the operation of Friant Dam could be further refined to more fully demonstrate how new storage could support river restoration and water quality objectives. Additional model refinements currently under way include potential new or enlarged facilities in the Upper San Joaquin River Basin and along the Friant-Kern Canal. Similar single-purpose evaluations will be made for retained storage options, as described in Chapter 4.

Planning tasks will shift toward development of a set of initial alternatives for consideration in Phase 2 study and the definition of continuation criteria. This will begin with a definition of functional equivalence criteria and a comparison of the retained options relative to the criteria. Continuation criteria will describe Federal, State, and user-group criteria that will be considered in a recommendation for continued study. Cost information for retained options will be used in combination with performance results to further screen options and a set of initial alternatives for consideration in Phase 2 study will be described.

Public involvement will continue through Phase 1. A series of eight stakeholder meetings (seven progress workshops and one topic-focused meeting) is described in Chapter 4. To date, this process is at a mid-point, with four meetings completed and four meeting remaining. The next workshop will focus on a review of this In-Progress Review document, a methodology for defining functional equivalence, and a discussion of continuation criteria.

The Draft Phase 1 Investigation Report is scheduled for release in June-July 2003 and the final report is scheduled for September 2003. Progress on the Investigation will continue as described above, pending FY 2003 Federal appropriations. Reclamation is not currently authorized to prepare a Feasibility Study for the Upper San Joaquin River Basin. Congressional authorization will be required before Phase 2 activities can begin.

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